

6-2011

## The Lab Report, volume 05, issue 01

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### Recommended Citation

Ristau, Todd, "The Lab Report, volume 05, issue 01" (2011). *Lab Reports*. 45.  
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Playwright's Lab  
at Hollins University

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# The Lab Report

Playwriting News from the Playwright's Lab at Hollins University

Volume 05, Issue 01 (June, 2011)

## Summer Event Schedule



**June 20** Orientation, Library Tour, Reception, and Rock the Stacks featuring the band Another Roadside Attraction playing in the Wyndham Robertson Library periodicals reading room.

**Every Friday Night** No Shame Theatre

**June 25** GUEST SPEAKER: **CHERYL SNODGRASS**

See *Frogger* written by Adam Hahn at Studio Roanoke

**June 26** Writing Workshop with Mac Wellman

**June 27** GUEST SPEAKER: **MAC WELLMAN**

**July 1** *Messages to You*, written and directed by Sunny da Silva at Studio Roanoke.

**July 2** Improv workshop with John Bergman

GUEST SPEAKER: **JOHN BERGMAN**

**July 3** Directing workshop with Bob Moss

**July 8** *Overnight Sensations* Reception

**July 9** *Overnight Sensations*

**Playwrights:** Todd London (New Dramatists), Dwayne Yancey (Roanoke Playwright), Taylor Gruenloh (MFA Playwright), Scott Ramsburg (MFA Playwright), Elizabeth Heffron (MFA Playwright), Samantha Macher (MFA Playwright)



**Directors:** Bob Moss (Founder of Playwrights Horizons), Kenley Smith (Studio Roanoke), Todd Ristau (Playwright's Lab), Rebecca Osborne (MFA Playwright), Charlie Boswell, Drew Dowdy

**July 10** *KONG: A Goddam Thirty-Foot Gorilla* by Adam Hahn at Studio Roanoke

**July 11** GUEST SPEAKER: **TODD LONDON**

**July 17** Reading of *SECONDS*, by W. David Hancock

**July 18** GUEST SPEAKER: **W. DAVID HANCOCK**

**July 22-24** FESTIVAL OF STUDENT READINGS which will include the following plays:

*Bonita* by Elizabeth Heffron

*The Veil* by Samantha Macher

*The Cavern of the Sun* by Darlene Fedele

*Carolina Dive* by Neeley Gossett

*Haemon* by Adam Hahn

*Radar Range* by Maura Campbell

*Tibet* by Robert Plowman

*Lost in the Crossing* by Jonathan G Galvez

*Web of Terror* by MBDuMonde

*Am I Black Enough Yet?* by Clinton A. Johnston

**Festival guest responders**



**include:** Jason Aaron Goldberg, Jeff Goode, Larry Harbison, Sandra Hosking, Mead Hunter, Gina Kaufmann, Bob Moss, Brett Neveu, Lisa Schlesinger, and Peter Ullian.

**July 28** *The Terrorism of Everyday Life* by Hamell on Trial in Talmadge Recital Hall

**July 25** GUEST SPEAKER: **MEAD HUNTER**

**July 28** Cafe Antarsia Ensemble performance at Studio Roanoke

**July 29** End of Session Party at the Director's House

Students are not required to attend No Shame Theatre (although you would really benefit from participating). Students are expected to be present for all guest speakers and strongly encouraged to attend any workshops held by guests. Students are also expected to attend any readings or performances of work by other students in the Playwright's Lab.



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## Guest Profile: Mac Wellman

**Mac Wellman** is one of the most important names in American theatre. He's published four books of poems, three novels, and anthologies of plays (like *New Downtown Now*). He has received fellowships from the NEA and NYFA, and from the Rockefeller, McNight, and Guggenheim foundations. He has received a Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Writers Award and three Obies, including one for Best Play and one for Lifetime Achievement. He is currently the Donald I. Fine Professor of Play Writing at Brooklyn College.

In 2007, Mac spoke to the Lab during our first summer and returned this year to conduct a workshop and give a public talk on his life in the arts and work with new writers.

### What differences do you see in the program since your last visit?

Well, first I want to thank Todd. He's a great man and he's doing great work here... and I think you are all aware of that. It's an incredibly innovative program and

in just a few years he's made it into something that's really, truly important. It's a hard thing to create one of these programs and it can take a while to catch on and I think he's done terrific work with this.

### Can you tell us about your program at CUNY?

I teach playwriting at Brooklyn College, I'm in the English Department, not the Theatre Department. The English Department is a deeply complex place, and they leave me alone because they think they understand what fiction is, and they think they understand what poetry is, but theatre scares them a little bit. So, they leave me alone and they let me do what I want. But, this has some consequences. I cannot give my students productions. I cannot even give them readings. I can't do anything for them. Initially, this depressed me a great deal and I tried to arrange readings at art galleries and places and like three people would show up and so I despaired of that. Then I decided, well, look, the people I want are *not* entitled playwrights. They are not going to Yale School of Drama, they're not going to Brown... I want people who are actually self-motivated and I began to get them. After about four or five years, I was getting a lot of them. Kind of maniacs. I want people to have a little edge. People who really *have* to do this. People who, all I had to do, was point them in the right direction and get them to lower their own self-criticism.

### People like Young Jean Lee?

Young Jean volunteered for intern positions at all the theatres where she saw work she liked. She was doing lights for the National Theatre, she interned at SoHo Rep. She wrote a play called *The Appeal*, and the Artistic Director there



produced it and let her direct it. It got a bad review, but now she's famous, because she was absolutely focused, she had something to prove. That's the kind of student I *like*, and I have a lot of them now. I actually have to turn down too many people that I really would like to have. The thing that is most wonderful about theatre people is they connect with each other and they make each other smarter, and they created a community.

### Why does teaching excite you?

I like working with young playwrights because they care so deeply about what they're doing and they are so blissfully unaware of the horrible perils of it all. And they are an inspiration to me.

### What do you look for in a prospective student?

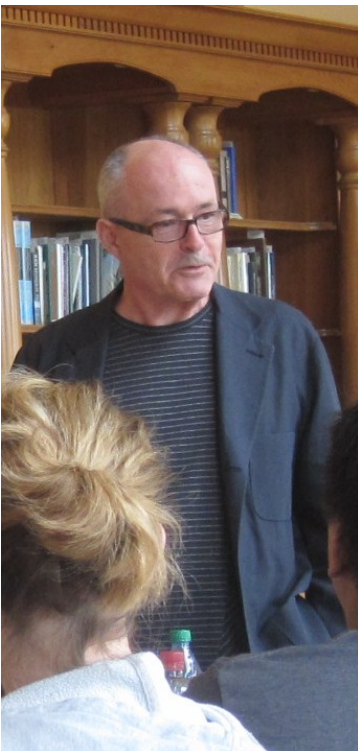
For me, it is very difficult to pick people. What I don't want are the people that have a two inch script that they think should be done at the Kennedy Center and that already think they should be acknowledged as a genius. I want the people that are a little

odd, a little eccentric and who don't quite know what they're doing but are on the verge of figuring it out.

### Is the theatre still relevant?

I think theatre is of supreme importance in this culture because at its best theatre is in the moment and we live in a culture that is *not* in the moment. Even bad theatre, if it is in the moment, is important. I think it is amazing that any theatre production is ever any good, considering how many things can go wrong. The thing that moves me about people in the theatre is that they do care about being in the moment, whereas most people don't. They either want to be ahead or in the past. For me, being in the moment means trying to encourage students who are very talented to do something that makes sense in this particular historical period that we live in... and that's what I try to do. I think it is important for people to start their own theatres. I think what's happening at Hollins is very important because people are doing that here.

macwellman.com





## Frogger by Adam Hahn at Studio Roanoke



*Frogger*, by Adam Hahn, was written in the First Drafts class taught by Todd Ristau during the summer session of 2009.

"I was interested in recruiting Adam as a playwright in our program at Hollins before the program was even approved by the Board of Trustees," Ristau recalls. "I was still putting together the program proposal and visited Iowa City, where Adam was living. I asked him what his biggest concern might be in weighing a low residency MFA program against a traditional one. He told me he was most worried about not learning the discipline to finish a play if he were only on campus for six weeks at a time. That was my inspiration to create the First Drafts class."

For the course students write one complete play for each week of the session, and have exactly 72 hours to write each one.

Hahn explained, "*Frogger* came out of an assignment which was to go to the library and find a newspaper or magazine article that inspired us and write a play about it in the style of expressionism. I found this interesting situation where a person had been in a series of accidents, had lost his parents as a kid, and a recent

motorcycle accident was increasing his debt and might keep him from becoming a lawyer. The play isn't really about the actual person in the article but the situation became the basis for this memory play."

The fictional main character of *Frogger*, Michael Conroy, keeps waking up in hospital rooms. He has had to learn to walk three times: once as a child, a second time after the car accident that killed his parents, and a third time after crashing his motorcycle. Limping toward his law degree, his student loan debt is now hundreds of thousands of dollars he sorts through a series of flashbacks which include a girlfriend no one will talk to him about and a foster brother obsessed with a certain early-eighties video game.

Hahn's play was selected for inclusion in the 2010-2011 season at Studio Roanoke, a small theatre dedicated to new play development founded by graduate of the Playwright's Lab Kenley Smith. Cheryl Snodgrass, a guest director from Chicago, was flown in to work on the play with Adam and the cast of local actors. Cheryl's career has focused on



new plays and she has directed world premiers by such professionals as Todd Ristau, Jeff Goode, Rebecca Gilman, and Brett Neveu. She has directed at least one reading or production by a playwright associated with the Playwright's Lab every year since the program started in 2007 and is already scheduled to return to Roanoke again in February and June of 2012 to direct plays at Studio Roanoke by Jeff Goode and Samantha Macher.

"Cheryl is an excellent director," Hahn said. "She has a fantastic reputation among people I respect and she gets my script. She understood what I'm trying to do and she focused in on areas that she had questions about. Working with her at this early stage allowed me get the script closer to the point where next time I won't have to actually be in the room for the

actors to understand what I've written."

Prior to this production, the *Frogger* had never even had a public reading and the script is nearly identical to what Adam turned in for a grade in class.

Snodgrass had no idea the script she was sent was only a first draft. She said, "When we first communicated, I wasn't looking for any changes at all. I had a few questions about what the writer meant about some things and how he wanted it presented... but it felt complete to me. It was invaluable to have Adam in rehearsal to clarify things and to provide necessary rewrites and adding material address problems we discovered when we heard the lines and saw people moving in the space."



"In every conversation we've had, we're both confident enough to admit when we don't understand something," Hahn agreed. "And, it's not that it is anyone's fault for not getting it. It means we need to talk about it and figure out what isn't working."

*Frogger* also featured puppets by MFA playwright Darlene Fedele and the cast included Laura Tuggle Anderson (Hollins, 1998). The New Works Initiative provided funds for the director's travel, housing and honorarium.

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## Cheryl Snodgrass on Directing New Plays

**Cheryl Snodgrass** has made a career of focusing on the production of new plays. She's a director, producer, actor, singer. Playwright and founder of several theatre companies, including the original No Shame Theatre.

Cheryl lives in Chicago, where she frequently collaborates with David Cerda and has been Jeff Recommended as both director and playwright. She has directed premiers by established playwrights like Jeff Goode, Rebecca Gilman and Brett Neveu as well as new plays by Hollins student playwrights like Maura Campbell and Adam Hahn. She gave a talk on her life and work at Mill Mountain Theatre and took questions from the audience.

### What do you like most about directing new plays?

The risk taking. The challenge of finding out how you're going to solve problems nobody has ever tackled before. And we're all braving something together. This could be a hot mess. It has never seen the light of day, but we're going to do it anyway. And that's really exciting.

### Do you prepare differently for a new play?

I don't try to solve every problem before walking into the first read through. I used to worry about not being more prepared, because with a published play, the text is fixed, you can do that kind of preparation, but with a new play the script may still be going through lots of changes during rehearsal. Everyone, including the writer, is engaged in discovery and I have to leave room for that.

### What is your process then, when you first meet a new playwright you're going to work with?

Honestly, it is different with each playwright. Some are incredibly daring. Some need careful

handling. I've done plays with people I know really well, and writers I've never met before. David Cerda, for example, is usually in the play and at that first rehearsal he's done being the writer and wants to be an actor from that point forward. And he's fearless about cutting. He cut his solo in *Trogg* because it was running too long.

### How do you select a new play to direct?

Honestly, half the time I'm hired to do new work, I've never read it. I trust the people that hand it to me. I trust them to know what I like.

### Is that why you work with the same people over and over again?

I work really consistently with a couple of different playwrights and theatres. It's like a marriage. I've never been married, but I know that good marriages can produce bad children and bad marriages can produce good children, so you can have a great relationship with the playwright and the play can still suck and you can have a horrible relationship with the playwright and still come up with great stuff. It is really about the quality of life you want. I've been lucky, I get to do great work with people I not only respect but love. I am really happy with the pieces that I do, I feel I do them honestly, with respect.

### Has No Shame helped you as a theatre artist?

Of course. Tremendously. Risk taking, experimentation, casting from a limited pool, thinking theatrically, meeting tight deadlines, having limited resources and solving problems as they arise are all things you confront at No Shame on a weekly basis. It makes you not only prepared, but eager to face



the unexpected problems you are going to encounter in production.

### What qualities do you think help you most as a director?

I love everything about theatre. I mean, that's it. I love theatre. I don't understand everything about it. I don't understand lighting. I just know lighter, darker, and let the designer and technician deal with it. I can't build a set, but I love the people that do. I love my stage managers. I love when actors feel ownership of what they are doing.

### Do you have any advice as a director for playwrights sending out their work?

A lot of theatres will say they do new plays. And they may do them, but they do them the same way they do old plays. They are attracted to new plays because there might be grant money or they want to be edgy

and cool, but they don't really understand that there needs to be a relationship with the human being who sent them the play. They don't want to communicate with the playwright because they don't know how...and the playwright sometimes is like an imposition on their process. Or, they think of themselves as auteurs, or co-authors. Because it isn't published they think they can change it or do whatever they want with it. It can be so dangerous. You really need to find out in advance about the theatre, and how they treat new work. What the communication level is going to be. Check out other authors they've produced and how they treated them. It isn't malice, they just don't know. They just don't know that they are doing something unethical, or immoral or illegal. They think they are making art. And they may. They may make a great show of it, but it won't be *your* show. If they don't want to do *your* show, don't let them.



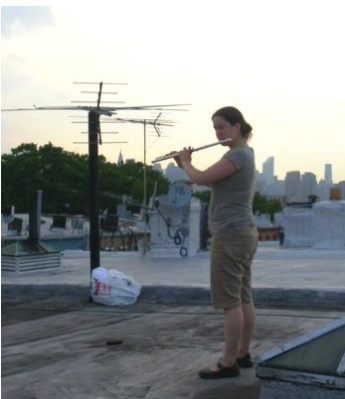
## Two Short Plays by Samantha Macher Featured in *Happening* at Hell-Tro Theatre Collective in Brooklyn



**Hell-Tro Theatre Collective** is a fledgling theatre company started by MFA playwright Samantha Macher, Sarah Azzinaro and Liz Torres.

Sam and Sarah have known each other since the 8th grade, and always knew that one day they would collaborate on something spectacular and experimental. With Sarah, a talented actor and director now located in Brooklyn, and Sam, an energetic playwright finishing her final year in our MFA program, the time seemed to have arrived. They teamed with actor/singer/producer Liz Torres to create a small company dedicated to doing non-traditional plays in unconventional spaces.

"I'm really passionate about this found space theatre," Macher



said. "Because, it's cheap and you can do these experimental things and you get big benefit with little risk."



On June 10th, the tiny theatre company held a "happening" on a rooftop in Brooklyn. Invitations were sent out through social media and the audience was quietly let into the designated apartment building, up the stairs and out of a small opening on the roof.

They were first treated to an original song on guitar by Macher and collaborator Jill Palumbo. Audience members were given percussion

instruments to join in as the rhythm section. Guitars were followed a flute when Elsa Nilsson played an improvised jazz tune called *We Have Socks for Hands*.

The main attraction for the evening were two plays written Macher. *Iceberg to Nowhere* and *Four Songs I Listened to When I Broke Up with Max in Eleventh Grade* are ten-minute plays written by Macher as part of the Short Forms course taught by program director Todd Ristau.



*Iceberg to Nowhere*, deals with two British penguins, one of whom isn't quite sure how to bring up the fact that he's been dating a polar bear. "It was really cool," Sam said of the event. "It was a genius move on the part of the director to have the Manhattan skyline behind the actors."

Prior to this rooftop revival of *Iceberg*, Macher's play was included in Theatre of NOTE's 10-minute play festival in April and also performed as part of Manhattan Rep's 10-minute Late Night Shows, which constituted Hell-Tro Theatre Collective's first production. Sarah Azzinaro directed the piece and also played one of the penguins at Manhattan Rep and company member Liz Torres played the other. Both



reprised their roles for the happening.

"They did very extensive research for a ten-minute play," Macher recalled. "The physicality was amazing. They preen, and waddle around in a very birdlike way. They're really great actors."




*Four Songs*, the companion piece, was written to be performed in the style of Young Jean Lee's *We're Gonna Die*. The semi-autobiographical script was performed by the playwright and accompanied by Jill Palumbo, who also collaborated on the original song in the play.

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## Hollywood Fringe Festival Features Clinton Johnston's *Am I Black Enough Yet?*



**SYNOPSIS:**  
No matter your ethnicity, for one night you get to be African American. *AIBIEY?* is a hysterically funny, thought provoking, yet unforgiving play that takes a look at the state of Blackness in America. Craftily written by Clinton A. Johnston in a George C. Wolfe's *COLORED MUSEUM* type of humor and style, a brilliant cast of actors pop into a variety of roles and rip roar through scenes that will induce chuckles, bursts of laughter and even stunned silence.

TICKETS \$12.00 @ <http://hollywoodfringe.org>  
\$15.00 @ Door

In association with HollywoodFringe.org

# AM I BLACK ENOUGH YET?

WRITTEN BY:  
**Clinton A. Johnston**

DIRECTOR:  
**Roger Payano\***

CAST:  
Nika Williams  
Katherine DuBois  
Matthew Eisenberg\*\*  
J. Patrick Wise  
Kenny Cooper

\*I.S.M.O. Theatre Company | \*\*Guest Artist Equity Agreement

Clinton Johnston wrote his play about race in America first as a series of No Shame pieces in Charlottesville. Later he combined the material into a cohesive whole and added more scenes to create a dynamic full length script. *Am I Black Enough Yet?* was first produced by Charter Theatre of DC (in cooperation with the Playwright's Lab, Mill Mountain Theatre and the Earl Hamner Theatre) when it opened for the world premier in 2008. The play was later produced at the University of Maryland.

This month, a new production runs as part of the Hollywood Fringe Festival in Los Angeles.

I.S.M.O Theatre Company was started by actor and director Roger Payano after he moved to Los Angeles from Washington DC. He was very interested in mounting a production in the Fringe Festival and asked George Grant (who directed the DC production of *AIBIEY?*) to connect him with the author.

Clinton was eager to help and gave permission to mount the production. Payano then contacted his friend and colleague, Matthew Eisenberg (who had acted in all four of the previous productions of *AIBIEY?*) to see if he would be interested in co-producing the showcase.

Eisenberg agreed, because of his faith in the script and also his eagerness to perform the roles he'd created in front of West Coast audiences. Payano directed but Eisenberg closely assisted to ensure everything that had made the play so successful back East remained in the new production while still leaving room for new ideas and the creative process of the new ensemble.

"I love how this play manages to tackle important issues regarding race without coming off as preachy," Eisenberg explained. "Everyone, including the audience, is on the same journey and no ethnicity is above another."

In Johnston's script, there are times when white actors play black characters and vice versa. In the opening scene, *Honorary Black Folk*, the entire audience is told that for the duration of the play, they are all black. People who are already black are now "Shaft-level black" who are asked to be cultural guides for their newly minted black brothers and sisters. This changes the audience from spectators to participants and is a wonderful challenge for the actors.

Eisenberg continued, "I love how the play is broken up into vignettes but still feels as if their is a through line. The message still comes full circle. It's a fine balance. I've done this play four different times, I've seen this play done in many different ways. The possibilities are endless. There is nothing more fun than playing 7 different roles, jumping in and out of the different characters. You never get bored and the writing never feels trite. Our real hope is to attract some people who would be able to fund this show for a big theatre production. We feel the play is that good."

The critics and audiences seem to agree with Matthew. Here are some of the reviews of the showcase in the Hollywood

Fringe Festival, which have been overwhelmingly positive:

*"Playwright Clinton Johnston's piece humorously explores what it means to be black in America today. Casting aside the burdensome moorings of political correctness, five actors (Nika Williams, J. Patrick Wise, Matthew Eisenberg, Katherine DuBois, and Kenny Cooper) adroitly work through ten vignettes that lampoon everything from ghetto slang to diversity run amok and even homophobia. It makes for a hilarious, thought-provoking, and sometimes unsettling 85-minutes."* **Lovell Estell III - LA Weekly**

*"Am I Black Enough Yet? could be about a lot of things. Thankfully, it transcends heavy handed cultural and ethnic issues to find a balance of humor and heart that, let's face it, is probably more endangered in today's theatre."* **Vince Duvall - LA Theatre Review**

*"...a patchwork of poignant and satirical skits grappling with questions of ethnicity... Johnston's bold tonal shifts add surprise and texture to the piece, which is always thoughtful..."* **Washington Post**

*"...simultaneously delightful and thoughtful...The strength of this piece is in its language, its humor, its humanity and its generous spirit - not in elaborate sets or visual effects. It is an enjoyably engaging evening without rancor but not without a strong viewpoint."* **Potomac Stages**

*"This creative script tackles sensitive, poignant, hilarious even bizarre issues involving race and race relations... AM I BLACK ENOUGH YET? raises important issues, without bringing unnecessary baggage"* **DC Theatre Scene**



For full details, reviews, cast list and bios please visit [www.hollywoodfringe.org/projects/523](http://www.hollywoodfringe.org/projects/523)



## Dramatists Guild Holds First Conference: A National Conversation



The Dramatists Guild of America held its first ever national conference in June, inviting guild members from around the country to come and participate in a weekend full of exciting talks, workshops, discussions, performances and conversation.

Hosted by Theatre of the First Amendment on the George Mason University campus in Fairfax, VA, the event was billed as a national conversation about playwriting. The hope, as envisioned by the organizers, was to bring together guild members as colleagues no matter their professional credits or level of experience to talk to each other in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity in the face of increasingly difficult financial conditions. Through that "National Conversation" the Guild itself would also gain a better understanding of the needs of its more than 6,000 members and take steps to better serve them.

Among the more than 350 Guild members from all its 21 regions attending the conference were Playwright's Lab Program Director Todd Ristau and MFA playwrights Samantha Macher and Rebecca Osborne.

"It was a fantastic opportunity meet new friends, renew relationships with colleagues, and connect with some remarkable professionals who might be excellent future guest artists and visiting faculty of the program here at Hollins," Ristau said of the event.

There were so many activities and panels of import to playwrights that it was often difficult to decide which panel or workshop to attend.

**Gary Garrison**, the Guild's Executive Director of Creative Affairs, served as emcee for most of the conference and gave a workshop on the ten-minute play that was so well attended it had to be moved from a classroom to the ballroom! Gary will be coming to Hollins as a guest speaker and guest responder for the 2012 Festival of Student Readings.



Keynote speakers for the conference included:

**Molly Smith**, Artistic Director of Arena Stage, has been a passionate leader in new play development for over 30 years. She discussed her creative relationships with writers and the New Play Institute residency program recently established at Arena Stage.



**Todd London**, Artistic Director of New Dramatists and one of the most respected advocates for new work in the field has been capturing attention with his work on *Outrageous Fortune: The Live and Times of the New American Play* which focused on the lives and livelihoods of playwrights as well as the economic realities of new play production. Everyone was



riveted by his observations on the challenges facing writers and theatres today. London will be joining us at Hollins as a guest speaker next month.

**Julia Jordan**, is an accomplished playwright who sits on the Council of the Dramatists Guild and teaches playwriting at Barnard College. She talked about gender parity in the theatre emphasizing the underrepresented, undercompensated contributions of women to the theatre and some strategies for correcting the situation.



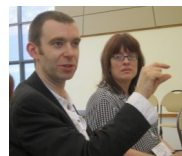
Other conference highlights:



**Jeffrey Sweet**, who came to Hollins in 2009, conducted a workshop on improvisation for playwrights.



**David Faux**, Director of Business Affairs at the Dramatists Guild, gave presentations on how playwrights should think of themselves as the CEO of their career, negotiating contracts without an agent and also use of other people's work in your own.



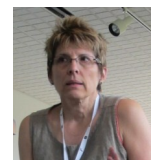
**Robert Ross Parker** (DG's Director of Publications) and **Tari Stratton** (DG's Director of Events & Outreach) led a panel on how the Dramatist Magazine is put together and the changes in that publication over the years.

**Gregg Henry**, who produces the annual MFA Playwright's Workshop at the Kennedy Center,



moderated a roundtable discussion with DC area artistic directors, dramaturgs and literary associates from theatres including Theatre J, Rorshach Theatre Company, Woolly Mammoth, Studio Theatre, Inkwell, Roundhouse, and Arena Stage.

**Christopher Durang**, talked about his life and career as one of our nation's leading dramatists.



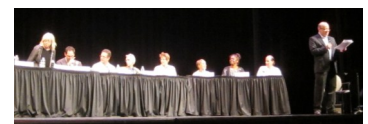
**Mame Hunt**, Dramaturg and Associate Artist with Sundance Theatre Lab discussed how to survive audience talkbacks.

**Emily Mann**, playwright and Artistic Director at the McCarter Theatre, told us about her early writing life and what she is working on today.



Others taking part as guests, panelists or speakers included Craig Carnelia, Kristen Childs, Carol Hall, Mark Hollman, David Ives, Greg Kotis, Susan Miller, Marsha Norman, Stephen Schwartz, Georgia Stitt, and Doug Wright.

Events were streamed live and may be viewed on New Play TV: [www.livestream.com/newplay](http://www.livestream.com/newplay)



[dramatistsguild.com](http://dramatistsguild.com)



## Playwright's Lab at Hollins University

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For application materials, please call (540) 362-6326 or visit on the web at [www.hollins.edu/grad/playwriting](http://www.hollins.edu/grad/playwriting) for more information.

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### From the Director: Excitement about the Summer Session

As this issue goes to press, we're already two weeks into the summer and I couldn't be more excited. We've got an excellent group of new students arriving for their first classes and a large number of our returning students will be on campus for their last summer session before beginning work on their thesis plays and preparing for graduation.

Hollins playwrights are getting productions and publications and really helping build a name for the program as they establish a name for themselves.

We have excellent visiting faculty this summer who are perfectly suited to teach the courses we're offering. Bob Moss, who was for all practical

purposes the Artistic Director of Albees' Playwrights Unit which launched the Off-off Broadway movement will be teaching courses on the history off Off-off Broadway and arts management. Ruth Margraff, who is one of the best known experimental playwrights and has taught at Brown under Paula Vogel will be teaching courses in playscript analysis and non-linear playwriting. I'll be teaching First Drafts again, a course which has seen several students assignments get full productions and publishing contracts, and I'll be heading up the Lab with some of the most amazing guest speakers you've ever met.

We have a full slate of extra workshops including one on directing led by Bob Moss and

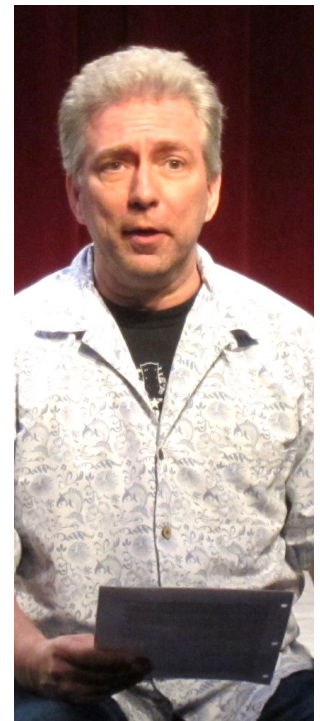
another on improvisation led by world renown drama therapist John Bergman.

Two students have full productions at Studio Roanoke this summer, there's performances by Ed Hamell and Café Antarsia Ensemble, No Shame every Friday and Overnight Sensations.

The Festival of Student Readings has an excellent sample of student work and some amazing guest responders from all over the country.

How will we fit it all in?

Figuring that out is a big part of the excitement. Please, join us and help us find out!



**Todd Ristau, Director**